



February 5, 2009

Re: Human and Labor Rights Groups Support the Employee Free Choice Act

Dear Member of Congress:

We wish to express our congratulations on your election to serve in the 111th Congress, and we look forward to working with you. The undersigned organizations—who are also members of the Child Labor Coalition—wish to express our support for the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), to be reintroduced in 111th Congress.

We are members of the Child Labor Coalition because we are committed to eradicating abusive child labor and supporting the rights of all workers to a safe working environment and a livable wage. It is in this same vein that we support the passage of EFCA. We believe that workers in the United States should have full rights to form unions that can represent their interests and negotiate on their behalf. Unionized companies tend to be workplaces in which child labor and other egregious labor abuses do not exist. It is time for Congress to address the needs of hard working Americans on Main Street and not just the interests of Wall Street.

EFCA will restore the right of workers to join together to get better health care, job security, and benefits – and an opportunity to pursue their dreams. We firmly believe the Employee Free Choice Act is good for consumers, for workers, and for American society. When workers enjoy the benefits of a unionized workforce, their standard of living rises and they can participate more fully in what our economic system has to offer.

We believe the Employee Free Choice Act will help restore fairness and the American dream by:

1. *Giving workers a fair and direct path to form unions through majority sign-up.* EFCA would require an employer to recognize its employees' union when a majority has signed union authorization cards. Under current law, management can refuse to recognize a union even when 100 percent of employees have signed authorization cards. After a majority of workers have signed cards, an employer can still call for a separate election.
2. *Helping employees secure a contract with their employer in a reasonable period of time.* Under current law, anti-union employers often drag workers through lengthy negotiations by delaying bargaining sessions, withholding relevant information, and putting forth bogus proposals. Even though these tactics are illegal, there are no effective deterrents to prevent "surface

bargaining." The Employee Free Choice Act will strengthen workers' ability to achieve a first contract within a reasonable period of time.

3. *Toughening penalties against employers who violate their workers' rights.* Too many unscrupulous employers get away with breaking labor laws because the current penalties are too weak. The Employee Free Choice Act would increase penalties against employers who illegally fire or retaliate against pro-union workers.

We, the undersigned organizations are happy to lend our support to this legislation that will help rebuild the middle class, reduce the likelihood of child labor violations, and improve the conditions of workers across America.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director
National Consumers League



Bama Athreya
Executive Director
International Labor Rights Forum



Amy Isaacs
National Director
Americans for Democratic Action



Caroline Ramsey Merriam
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